

JOHN BOOZMAN

United States Senator *for* ARKANSAS

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Boozman Bulletin: Join in the Fight

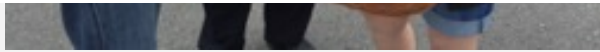
Policymakers have been struggling to help confront our nation's heroin and opioid epidemic. Arkansas has been hit particularly hard by this national crisis. Retail data collected from pharmacies shows Arkansas has one of the highest per capita opioid consumption rates in the nation. Data from the Centers for Disease Control shows we have the second highest prescribing rate in the country—enough for each Arkansan to have more than one opioid prescription in his or her name.

The recent funding bill, signed into law by President Trump, included substantial resources for a wide-ranging strategy to counter this epidemic. The bill increases resources for law enforcement, allocates money to important grant programs that help state and local governments offset the costs of opioid abuse and provides funds for research into opioid addiction and alternative treatments.



In early 2010, a similar program launched in our state to encourage Arkansans to monitor, secure and dispose of their prescription medications. This initiative, known as Arkansas Take Back, is decreasing the availability of unnecessary prescription drugs by properly disposing of expired and unneeded medication.

Research has found that the majority of opioid abusers get their drugs from friends and family, often lifting pills from a familiar medicine cabinet. Removing them from homes helps reduce experimentation and



**Helping the Benton Police Department collect
unnneeded and unused prescription medication at an
Arkansas Take Back event.**

overdoses.

Despite our state's modest population, Arkansas ranks 13th in the nation in total weight collected over the course of 14 statewide take

back events. These events have produced the return of almost 132 tons of unneeded medications, which amounts to more than 400 million pills. This campaign is clearly succeeding at getting unnecessary prescription drugs out of circulation and helping break the cycle of addiction in our communities.

Saturday, April 28 is the next Arkansas Take Back Day. There are more than [130 permanent drop-off sites](#) across Arkansas and many law enforcement agencies host temporary drop-off sites on this day as well.

We all have a role to play in this effort. Arkansas Take Back is an easy way each of us can do our part.

Quick Takes:

- **Responding to Syrian Chemical Attack:** Chemical attacks by Bashar al-Assad on the Syrian people must be met with [aggressive action to deter these atrocities in the future](#). This joint operation, with our steadfast allies the UK and France, delivered that message in a very measured and direct manner. It is past time for Russia and Iran to end their support of this brutal regime.
- **Improving Veterans' Services:** I'm pleased to have been chosen to [serve as Chairman](#) of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies. This role will allow me great opportunity to continue my work to ensure our nation's veterans receive the care and benefits they have earned. I look forward to advancing [policies that fulfill the promises](#) made to our veterans and their families and prioritizing Department of Defense infrastructure investments to strengthen our national security.
- **Supporting Arkansas's Role in Defending our Nation:** I'm proud to support the missions of Arkansas Air Force installations and the many airmen and civil servants who work tirelessly to keep our country safe. Recently, we [welcomed Air Force Secretary Dr. Heather Wilson to the state](#) to tout the missions of the Little Rock Air Force Base and the 188th Wing in Fort Smith. I appreciate Secretary Wilson's time and attention in visiting Arkansas to see how our state supports our national security interests.
- **Urging Caution on Tariffs:** China's threatened tariffs could impact Arkansas agricultural producers. The escalation in trade rhetoric alone is negatively affecting markets and creating uncertainty. We can appropriately [hold China accountable for its unfair trade practices without holding our agricultural industry hostage](#).
- **Combatting Human Trafficking:** Earlier this month, the President signed legislation [aimed at curbing online sex trafficking into law](#). The new law includes the *Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act (SESTA)*, which reforms a misused provision in a 1996 telecommunications act that allows companies to evade prosecution for online business practices that facilitate human trafficking. I [spoke in support of this legislation](#) when it was being debated in the Senate.
- **Helping Arkansas Rebuild and Recover:** The Department of Transportation recently

approved more \$48 million in grants for Arkansas to [help repair roads and critical infrastructure](#) damaged from heavy rains and floods.

- **Recognizing Arkansas Veterans:** The 'Salute to Veterans' series honors the service and sacrifice of Arkansas veterans who served our nation in uniform. In the latest edition, I recognized [WWII veteran Gordon Bentley](#), a decorated naval pilot. Mr. Bentley says he was well-trained and credits his success to his instructors, a crop duster and an acrobatic pilot. For his service, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. His interview will be submitted to the Veterans History Project.
- **Connect on Social Media:** Stay up to date with what I'm doing for Arkansans via social media. You can find me on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).



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